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BOOK REVIEWS

The Culture Readers. No. II. By ELLEN E. K. WARNER. Chicago: D. Appleton & Co.

This book has the merit of making the first page of reading really worth while. Throughout the book other pages are worth reading. The pity is that all are not. To tell a commonplace thing in a commonplace way is not literature. To read such is not education. For instance, the following, quoted in part, occupies the greater part of two pages:

1. "Well, my dear, what are you doing?"
2. "I am sewing a mitten."
3. "Oh no, that is not sewing. That is knitting. Who began it for you?"
4. "My mamma began it. She is making a pair of mittens for me," etc.

To expend the time and effort which a little child exerts to read a page of printed matter deserves results which should be to him in proportion to that effort. Every such effort should leave the impression that it is pleasant to know how to read. The foregoing quotation is not stimulating to further effort. The child has got no thought which is worth getting. What is the purpose of reading, if not to gain thought valuable in its picture, information, or fun?

Some teachers use phonics as a conscious help to reading. Others use phonics with quite another purpose. Many teachers desire to keep out of the children's minds the processes of learning so far as possible. For this reason the lists of phonetic words should not be placed in the text which the children read, but in a separate place, that the teacher may use her discretion in her use of it.

The publishers are to be congratulated on the attractive print, paper, and pictures which make up the book.

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LARRA'S *Partir á Tiempo*. Edited by EDWIN B. NICHOLS. New York: American Book Co. Pp. 66. \$0.40.

One of the most popular comedies of this leading Spanish writer, and the only edition of the play published in America. It tells the story of a young man who, discovering his growing attachment for the wife of his benefactor, departs in time to retain his loyalty to both. It is characterized by graceful humor, keen observation, and rare qualities of style. It affords ample opportunity for the study of colloquial Spanish, and for the acquisition of a wide vocabulary, and though slight in itself, it is especially suited for class reading. It is the most recent addition to the constantly growing series of "Modern Spanish Readings" now being published by the American Book Co.